4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

484 562 777 789 small objects, which they themselves have worn, as talismans to ensure their safe return, and during their often protracted absences they resort to various 787 methods of divination, either with or without the aid of a professional wise woman, in order to discover how their beloved spouses fare, where they sojourn, and how they are occupied.

152 593 The men on their side are not free from home-sickness, and many are the pathetic little exile-songs, in which their longings for their native mountains, and for the beloved ones from whom they are, for a time, separated, find expression. One may serve as a specimen:

[539]

Now in Bender, now in Buda,
Bide we lone and desolate.
Patience, heart! What boots complaining,
So it hath been willed by Fate.

Yet this grievous bitter exile
Cannot longer still be borne;
Is't naught that we like felons wander
From Fatherland as outlaws lorn?

Who the exile's griefs can number?
Say whose woes can equal mine?
E'en the viper, should she sting me,
Poisoned by my blood would pine!

527 535 The amusements of the Albanian women are, for the most part, limited to birth and wedding festivities, at which singing and dancing are the principal features. Albanian dances are of two kinds: the Pyrrhic, as it is called by travellers, which is usually indulged in by the men, and a kind of "kerchief dance," which is affected by the women, the two sexes always performing separately. The women dance in couples,

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

holding each other with one hand while they execute a step composed of shuffles and leaps, and not particularly graceful, waving at the same time over their heads a kerchief, or scarf, with their disengaged hand. Another dance of a pantomimic character is sometimes performed at weddings for the amusement of the company. Three masked men, in the characters of a man, his wife, and his servant, perform a burlesque representing the weakness of man and the unfaithfulness of woman. The husband expresses by gesture his despair at seeing his wife make eyes at the wedding guests, while her servant, armed with a broom in lieu of a gun, threatens to shoot her mistress's lovers.

The Albanians are, as M. Dozon remarks,[1] "without literature, without art, and almost without a history." Their language, which is difficult to learn and difficult to pronounce, is a complete mosaic of fragments borrowed from many sources, though a native element naturally predominates. Greek and Turkish words abound, and many of Slav and Latin origin have become part of the vernacular. The language of the Skipetars is also divided between the two dialects spoken respectively by the Tosks and the Ghegs, though there is no well-defined line of demarcation between them. The purest Albanian is said to be spoken at Elbassan, the inhabitants of which according to the native saying:

> "Turk of Stambolhit [Constantinople],
> Skipe of Elbasanit,"

are looked upon as representative Skipetars. The total neglect of the mother tongue has been due in

[1] *Manuel de la Langue Chkipe*, pp. 1 and 163.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

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Head thy poultice,
Head this stone.[1]

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A few of the trifling occurrences of every-day life to which a superstitious significance is attached by the Albanians have their parallels in our own country. We say, for instance, when seized by a sudden shiver, "Some one is walking over my grave;" while an Albanian says, "Death is calling me," and mentally replies, "I am not yet ready." When attacked with a fit of hiccough, the Albanian believes that some friend is speaking of him, and calls over the names of all his relatives and acquaintances, in the belief that the one he mentions with the last hiccough will be the one who has uttered his name. If the eye itches, it denotes coming rain; if the right hand, vexation consequent on being called upon to pay money; if the left, the receipt of money; itching of the lips signifies the arrival of a friend or relative; of the nose, strife and discord. Humming in the right ear is looked upon as a good omen, and in the left the reverse. If a little child drops asleep just before a meal, the incident is regarded as most propitious for the whole household.

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In addition to the every-day observances with respect to auspicious and inauspicious actions and events, so many are attached to certain seasons and days of the year as to form quite a Calendar of Superstitions. Some tribes, the Ritza, for example, celebrate their New Year's Day on the 1st of September, and every

[1] illegible
illegible

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

incident that occurs during its twelve hours is believed to presage the events of the corresponding months of the coming year, and the events of the first day of each month the character, lucky or unlucky, of the other days generally. It is unlucky to work in the fields during the first week of October, and no corn is sown this month, as the crop would be sure to fail.

The period between the 15th of November and the 6th of January is, like the Greek *Fisholi* and the Bulgarian *Kulada*,[1] supposed to be the carnival time of the Vilas and other supernal beings, who are, at that season, not only more active, but more powerful than at others, and especially during the night. After sunset, consequently, people refrain from going abroad, or drinking water, for fear of mischief, and give no credence to their dreams. They are also careful not to leave any article of wearing apparel out of doors after nightfall, and if, by some oversight, a garment should be so left, it is washed before being used, in order to get rid of any spell cast upon it by the supernals.

Christmas, which bears a name (*Kolendravel*[2]) apparently connected with those by which it is known among the Bulgarians and Vlachs, is observed with ceremonies that recall those of more Northern nations, as well as with some similar to those of their last-mentioned neighbours. On the 24th and 25th of

[1] Vol. i. pp. 123 and 329.

[2] Von Hahn derives this name from the κολένδρα, the ring-shaped cakes made at this season. I would, however, suggest the greater likelihood of the cakes having been named after the name of the feast in its various forms of (Albanian) *Kolendravel*, (Vlach) *Kolindi*, and (Bulgarian) *Kulada*.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

December the housewife makes, besides other sweet cakes, some in the shape of rings, which are called *Koléndhra*. The one first made is termed "the cake of the oxen," and is hung up on the wall "for luck," and left there until the farmer goes out with his team to the fields. On this occasion the cake is taken down and broken to pieces on the head of one of the yoked oxen, and then divided between the pair.

Fire-ceremonies play a great part in the Christmas observances of the Albanian highlanders. As may have already been remarked in connection with birth-ceremonies, a protective and salutary character appears to attach to the fire on the hearth, and not only on such occasions, but on the eve of every important festival, the Albanian peasants light fires and keep them burning until sunset on the following day, even in summer; and from the crackling, or exploding, noises emitted by the wood in burning, they learn when the enemies of their house are conspiring against them, and whether the flocks will thrive, or the contrary. On ordinary occasions they consider it inauspicious when the thick end of a log burns before the thin, and are careful not to place one log across another. On Christmas Eve, however, all such precautions are considered unnecessary. The fire is piled up as high as the safety of the house will permit, as this is supposed to neutralise all evil effects of the non-observance of the foregoing precautions during the coming year. The largest log that can be found is brought home at sunset, when all the family, who are reunited for the festival, rise to greet it with the words, "Welcome, our log! God has destined thee for the fire! Bring

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

789 372 good luck to us and to our flocks!" Before the family sit down to supper a small quantity of food from every dish on the table is placed upon the burning log. Some branches of a cherry tree are also put on the fire, and, when partially burnt, are taken off again and kept.

857 533 Soon after midnight, the boys, in companies of from ten to fifteen, go singing from house to house, and receive, in reward for their carols, a ring-cake from each housewife.

527 789 787 [372] On the Eve of St. Basil (January 1) the fire is also kept burning all night, and the half-burnt cherry branches are again thrown on and withdrawn, to be wholly consumed on the Eve of the Epiphany, when the ashes are collected and strewn in the vineyard. The fire of St. Basil's Eve is often watched by an expectant mother, who thus hopes to ensure an easy confinement. In the morning people wash themselves and their children with "unspoken-over" water, and draw omens from the character, gay or sad, of the person who first enters the house. A cock is also sacrificed, for it is auspicious to spill blood in the house on St. Basil's Day.

789 [787] On the Eve of Epiphany the fire is also kept alight all night, and in the morning the character of the coming seasons is prophesied from the set of the wind. If a south wind blows, it indicates a full harvest and sickness; if the wind is from the east, a scanty harvest and a healthy year are predicted; if from the north, a late spring. The Christians, on the Feast of Epiphany, sprinkle their vineyards with holy water, in the hope of ensuring a plentiful crop of

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

789 needle, a warning evidently to other fleas of the fate awaiting them.

The women in South Albania twist together a [751] number of coloured threads and tie them round the children's wrists and necks, in order to preserve them from sunburn or sunstroke, and draw a similar thread along the threshold of the house. They also roll up tightly little balls of rag, at which they stitch assiduously with a needle and thread; and when asked what they are doing, they reply, "We are sewing up the plague, snakes, and sickness." On this day no vegetables are eaten, the sweet cakes and dishes, in which the Ritza alone indulge, being believed to ensure a good [777] summer. The whole of this month is a close time for the ravens, as to kill one would bring bad luck to the vintage.

• 527 The North Albanians begin their year on the 1st 789 of March. On this day the cattle are decked with gar- 777 lands of flowers, and the Ghegs not only tie threads of [805] many colours on the wrists and necks of their children, but themselves also wear one of red silk on the little finger of the right hand and the great toe of the right foot. When the first swallow has been seen, they take off these threads, and hang them on the rose-bushes, in order that the swallows may take them to their nests. [177] Von Hahn is of opinion that this graceful little custom is not indigenous, and it may indeed have been partly borrowed, either from the Bulgarians, or, through the neighbouring Vlachs, from the Roumanians, with whom, as I have already mentioned,[1] a similar usage exists. While I was at Salonica, one

[1] Vol. i. p. 333.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

of these parti-coloured bracelets, with a tiny gold coin attached, was, on the 1st of March (Old Style), presented by the Roumanian Consul-General to each lady of his acquaintance, and I, for one, religiously wore my charm against the power of the March sun, which in the East generally is said to "blacken" the complexion, until the month was out. It was not, however, finally thrown to the swallows, but carried off by an English visitor as a curio.

On the 25th of this month the women go through the house beating on copper pans, in order to drive out any poisonous snakes that may have intended to take up their abode there. The two last days of March and the first of April are called *Plyáketé*, a word signifying "old," and referring to the past season, personified as "Old Mother Winter." If by the last-mentioned date Spring has not yet fully set in, the blame is laid at the door of the old women, who are evidently held to be in league with "Old Mother Winter."

On Easter Eve in some places, Selitza, for instance, the young men assemble with lighted torches, which they wave about as they walk in procession through the village. Arrived at the river, they throw them in, crying, "*Koré-ya* (O Maiden)! We throw thee into the water with these torches, so mayest thou never return!" the *Koré* evidently referring, as Von Hahn suggests,[1] to the malevolent supernals, Vilas, Dragouas, &c., before described. When the priest comes to bless the house on Easter Day, the women throw after him, as he leaves, hot embers from the

[1] *Albanesische Studien*, p. 160.

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

623 expression 'to take on the shoulder', which is frequently heard in
709 speech all over the country in the sense of 'to destroy' or 'to ruin', seems to derive from this obviously very ancient method of making oath. 'If I don't act justly, may I carry this weight in this world and the next', the elder swore solemnly as, irrespective of whether he was Catholic, Orthodox or Moslem, he embarked on his delimitation. In most cases he believed that if he were unfair the earth and stone would punish him literally as he said. 'Earth will rot us all one day; we can't put it lightly on our shoulders like a stone. It's a very serious thing; we stake our soul by touching it', were some of the expressions used to explain the general fear. Some men were so frightened of the dread symbols that they would not undertake to delimit a boundary, saying, 'It's a serious business to undertake such a thing; it brings you up against God's justice'. A few others, it must be confessed, were sceptical enough in consideration of a bribe to defy the consequences of perjury and to delimit unfairly.

423 Boundary stones then were set up by elders in the presence of
527 witnesses as an abiding memorial to the ownership of the land they outlined. 'A fence may rot, a boundary does not', said the proverb. 'Let ever so many be killed: a field, or mountain, a vineyard cannot be seized by force; the boundary stones say who is the lawful owner', was another aphorism. In many places it was customary, generation after generation, to 'ride the marches' once a year so that the old could show the young where the stones were and so forge the next link in the endless chain of memory. Like its British counterpart, the custom gave occasion for a public holiday. Often performed, as in Nangë, at the spring festival of 'Summer Day', all men and boys in a village went round every known boundary in it. They saw that the boundary stones were still in place and not sunk out of sight, noted their position, and cleared away thorns and other concealing overgrowth. Often, as in Nangë, they were led by gypsies banging joyously on drums.

423 It was thought a sin to move boundary stones, since they had
685 been set up in such solemn circumstances by elders, the highest
783 tribal authorities. But land-hunger was so prevalent that the sin was all too common. With the lapse of time, too, boundary stones might sink out of sight in the ground and the boundary line be obliterated. Disputes over boundaries were consequently endless. To prevent them there were various deterrents. Men of weight—